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SENSITIVE
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SUBJECT: TFHA01: DANISH RESPONSE HAS BROAD BACKING

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(U) SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED--NOT FOR INTERNET
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11. (U) SUMMARY: The Danish Government is determined to allocate as much as needed for Haiti relief efforts. Contributions totaled approximately USD 23 million by January 26; distribution is being coordinated closely with the UN. Extensive and successful private fundraising activities continue; as of January 22, approximately USD 7.7 million had been collected. The Danish Foreign Minister criticized the slow pace of the EU response but did not criticize U.S. efforts. After some local criticism of the Danish response, political consensus appears to be emerging on the level and pace of government contributions. END SUMMARY.

LARGE-SCALE DANISH CONTRIBUTION TO HAITI RELIEF EFFORTS

12. (U) The Danish Government continues to pledge to respond to all UN requests for assistance to Haiti. In total, the Danish Government's contributions to Haitian relief efforts amounted to almost USD 23 million as of January 26. Private donations totaled approximately USD 7.7 million as of January 22. The Danish Government response is being spearheaded by Minister for Development Cooperation Ulla Toernaes, who on January 14 announced the Danish Government's initial contribution of USD 1.9 million to UN relief operations in Haiti. Responding to early opposition claims that the Government was doing too little too late, Minister Toernaes left an important internal cabinet seminar to make a strong response in the media that the Government stood ready to allocate whatever was needed, but insisted on awaiting directions from the UN. The MFA subsequently announced on January 16 the allocation of an additional USD 7.55 million, half to the UN and half to Danish relief NGOs.

GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE REACHES ALMOST USD 23 MILLION

13. (U) In addition to USD 1.9 million for miscellaneous assistance to NGO programs, Minister Toernaes on January 20 announced an allocation of USD 3.77 million for UNICEF and UNFPA relief programs, which brought the total Government allocation to Danish Kroner (DKK) 80 million, equivalent to approximately USD 15.1 million. She also announced that the Government made immediately available Denmark's annual contribution to the UN disaster relief fund and the UNWFP, in the amount of DKK 150 million, or USD 28.3 million. Minister Toernaes announced on January 25 that the Government has allocated USD 1.14 million for an additional

tent camp project for UN relief workers jointly sponsored with other Nordic countries, plus USD 0.950 million for special UNFPA projects. Finally, emerging from a coordination meeting with the principal relief NGOs on January 26, Minister Toernaes announced the allocation of an additional USD 5.65 million for UN programs. The combined Government donations thus total nearly USD 23 million.

PRIVATE FUND-RAISING EXCEEDS PUBLIC ALLOCATIONS

14. (U) By January 22, the estimated combined fund-raising efforts by the principal relief and development NGOs (Danish Red Cross, UNICEF Denmark, Save the Children, Doctors without Borders, etc.) amounted to DKK 41 million, or approximately USD 7.7 million, which at that point was approximately 50% more than the total public allocation (we do not have updated figures for private funds raised). Private fund-raising activities continue in close cooperation, especially with electronic media organizations. The largest corporate donation is an offer by Maersk Group to make two ships available free of charge for transport of aid to Haiti, in addition to free usage of Maersk-operated terminals and containers for aid destined to Haiti.

FOREIGN MINISTER CRITICIZES EU EFFORTS, BUT NOT U.S. MILITARY

15. (U) Emerging from an EU ministerial on January 25 in Brussels, Danish Foreign Minister Per Stig Moeller came out strongly critical of the EU performance, specifically that it took a week before the EU development ministers convened for their first

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planning meeting, and almost two weeks for the EU to decide on deploying 350 police officers to help deliver emergency supplies. Explaining that Denmark will contribute neither soldiers nor police officers to Haiti, he still supported the EU line: "It is not a military task to protect emergency relief. The EU therefore wants the UN to take over responsibility from the American military," while insisting that this is in no way a criticism of the rapid U.S military response.

CONSENSUS BUILDING ON GOVERNMENT ALLOCATIONS

16. (SBU) On January 20, the Government's initial commitments were met with demands from a united front of center and left opposition parties that the Government allocate at least as much as was given to the tsunami relief efforts 5 years ago, which amounted to DKK 420 million, approximately USD 80 million. To this, Minister Toernaes responded: "We are far from having full knowledge of the extent of the disaster, so this does not make sense. We follow the situation closely and are constantly in touch with the UN system It is not my impression that more money is the greatest need right now, rather ensuring that the relief gets out." With no new criticism of the Government on this issue since, and considering the additional allocation, it appears that broad political consensus is being established on the appropriate level of Danish Government support. Certainly for now, the opposition is targeting its criticism of the Government at other issues.

FULTON